

A Program of Social Justice

N. C. A. F. RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE;
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PREAMBLE

IN this turbulent and adventurous year, with a new national Administration forging vast plans for a new alignment of social forces in the midst of our greatest crisis, the National Catholic Alumni Federation has been devoting its energies to developing a program for social justice based on the ethical principles laid down by Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno." Beginning with the regional conferences in November, 1932, it has continued its studies and discussions during the winter and spring, and now comes to its convention ready to adopt recommendations for specific action.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The Encyclical of Pope Pius XI lays down certain broad ethical principles which should govern social reconstruction and a better ordering of the social life of man. The Pope is obviously seeking what might be termed the Eunomic, or well-ordered State, as distinct from the Communistic State, on the one hand, and the individualistic State, working on the outworn principle of *laissez faire*, on the other. He maintains the human rights of property, not only in personal goods, but in instruments of production and transmission by inheritance. But he condemns vigorously the abuse of these rights through excessive individualism and uncontrolled limitless free competition. He places first things first—the right to life and to work for a livelihood, for example, even before property rights or their use, and he makes unmistakably clear the imperative

duty of the State and vocational groups within the State to see that these rights are preserved in their proper order. He seeks an increase of personal responsibility, as against the thinly spread corporate responsibility of the Communist State, but he summons the full power and majesty of the State to see to it that evasion of responsibility is checked, that abuse of power is curtailed, and that the moral and physical integrity and the economic security of human beings and their families are protected. He appeals to us for an ordering of human affairs based on clear standards and exposes the fallacy of unlimited competition in which the rules of the game are established by the most powerful, or, in some cases, by the most numerous and unscrupulous rather than by reasoned standards of right and wrong.

The recommendations of your committee are based on these general principles as applied to the American scene. It is our belief that through a better ordering of the economic world the violence of industrial cycles will be diminished, the economic security of human lives will be maintained, and that the force of individual initiative will be properly preserved but harnessed to serve the primal rights of men and the spirit of charity and justice.

THE BETTER ORDERING OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

The central thought and purpose of the Encyclical is the creation of an organized economic order, and we make the attainment of this order the first and general objective of our work. We urge, therefore, following the recent Statement of the Bishops and the pronouncements of Pope Pius XI, that "government in the fulfillment of its functions should assist in the organization of the various economic groups," as the National Industrial Recovery Act provides, but we add with them that "such an organization of the various economic groups along the lines of their separate industries and fields of endeavor should embrace representatives of every element in the economic group."

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT

We therefore endorse the National Industrial Recovery Act insofar as it sets up trade associations for the attain-

ment of an organized economy, but we insist that the conduct of these associations remain not solely in the hands of the employers but embrace labor and government representing the general public, and we sound the warning that we shall otherwise have all the evils of licensed but essentially uncontrolled monopoly without any social advantages for the employes and the public at large. If the Trade Associations operate with the sincere desire of bringing about social justice, there is no doubt but they will be able to go far in that direction. On the other hand, if they are manipulated in the interests of excessive profits and with the attempt to secure monopoly advantages, they will completely fail and will immensely strengthen movements that aim at radicalism and Communism.

We recommend that groups in the Federation give intensive and critical study to the various codes adopted by industries under the National Industrial Recovery Act and from time to time make their findings public.

DUTY OF GOVERNMENT

In its regulation of these trade groups, in which capital, labor, and the public should be represented, we hold that the primary task of government is to establish standards which will regard trade practices, minimum wages, hours, and other working conditions essential to decent living and the preservation of that purchasing power necessary to the existence of industry itself, and to enforce these standards so that private industry shall be conducted for the public good.

SMALL BUSINESS

While admitting that the larger corporation has its place in our economy, we call for an end to its "intolerable abuses, especially its clandestine manipulation of trust funds and earned surplus," and we likewise call for the preservation of smaller units, which have a right to exist and are necessary and should be protected by the Government in its regulation of the trade associations.

RAILROADS

We also hold that the recent railroad legislation, in effect bringing the carriers under a form of social control, is an advance along the lines of social justice, and we pledge

our efforts to the end that its execution shall be for the public good with the proper balancing of the rights of labor, stockholders and the general public. We also sound the warning that the rights of the railroad workers must be recognized in the general reorganization, that their jobs must not be ruthlessly sacrificed, but that changes be made gradually and with due regard to human as well as property rights.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Among other necessary reforms in organizing our economic order we single out especially our natural resources, such as oil, coal and water power, and we demand that under government regulation their development be conducted with recognition of the fact that such resources that are undeveloped should be held by the government in trust for the people, that waste be peremptorily stopped, and that prices be controlled so that, to quote Pope Pius XI, "in future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy."

MORAL BACKING

We believe, however, that legislation governing such control in production and distribution, both in inter-state and intra-state commerce, demands for its success a widespread campaign of education so as to bring behind it the entire conscious moral force and organized will of the community. This will give it a positive rather than a merely negative influence. To this end, we recommend lectures and discussions by local groups of the Federation is a means of promoting a better understanding of the sound ideals underlying this new concept of industrial organization, and recommend that each individual affiliated with the Federation will in his own business or profession make daily earnest effort to apply in his own life and within his own business or profession the principles of social justice expressed in the encyclicals and their practical application.

PARTNERSHIP FINANCING

With a constantly changing price level, the principle of long-term borrowing means either that debts are discharged in a lower purchasing power than the amount borrowed (thus providing an incentive to speculative greed) or that

they must be discharged in dollars with a much higher purchasing power than that originally borrowed, thus causing widespread default and destruction of capital. In either case, if the financing were obtained at partnership risk (that is, by sale of common or preferred stock instead of bonds), both the investor and the original owner would share in the risks of a changing price level. The same principle that applies to borrowed money in terms of dollars applies to interest rates figured in terms of dollars. The principle of a fixed dollar indebtedness and its corollary of a fixed interest rate in a world of changing price levels is one of the major causes of financial instability and economic insecurity. A capitalism of simple partnership, instead of a dual capitalism of long term money lenders and owners, would seem to avoid one of the major disorders of the present world crisis.

RECOMMENDATION

We hold that this principle, namely, that long term financing should be arranged through common or preferred stock rather than through bonds, should be adopted in the various production codes of each industry organized under the National Industrial Recovery Act. This can be done both by Government insistence that it be included in each code, and by the organized industries agreeing among themselves that future long term financing be conducted on this basis.

DISTRIBUTION OF EARNINGS

As a further part of the organization of industry, we recommend that it should be a common practice in the code of the trade associations to have earnings segregated as follows: (1) a reserve for future interest payments or for the retirement of debt, (2) a reserve for the protection of labor employed in the industry, this reserve to constitute either a special fund or the equivalent in some form of unemployment insurance applicable to the entire labor group employed, and, (3) in the case of a corporation, a reserve for the payment of future dividends on common and preferred stocks. All of these reserves should be in liquid form.

This we are convinced, so far as the action of organized

industry can help, is one of the best means for controlling unemployment and providing against its evils.

REASON

In case of the average corporate enterprise, gross earnings are usually allocated first to the payment of interest on indebtedness and to the retirement of debt, then to dividends to preferred and common stockholders, and finally to a general surplus or reserve. In the majority of instances, there is no attempt to earmark or segregate earnings in such a way as to provide clearly for specific future contingencies.

ADVANTAGES

Such a segregation of reserves would prevent the discriminatory payment of dividends which weakens the future ability of the company to maintain employment schedules and to meet interest on indebtedness. It is fair neither to the labor employed in a company nor to the creditors of a company to use up all available surplus earnings of previous years in order to maintain dividends on equity holdings. It is, of course, a perfectly sound principle of accounting that some reserves for future unearned dividends should be set aside. But such reserves should be established in advance and when they are once exhausted there should be no encroachment on reserves intended for the benefit of labor or for the benefit of creditors. The amount and the scope of such segregated reserves are not subject to statutory regulations. But the mere fact that they are set up and are marked for special purposes will make it possible to gather more accurate data from year to year and eventually to work out a fair proportion for segregation in each type of industry.

In this connection, we heartily endorse the sound principle behind the Truth in Securities Act as calculated to stimulate higher standards of honesty in financing and better and more uniform practices in accounting.

BANKING RESPONSIBILITY

We call for a greater extension of responsibility in banking, and for stricter accountability of banking officers and directors. Hence we endorse in principle recent legis-

lation bringing about a stricter separation of banking functions. We recommend that commercial bank stockholders give bond for their double liability and that this liability be subject to call whenever a bank's assets fail to exceed its liabilities by a recognized margin. Responsibility should rest with the Federal Government for Federal Reserve member banks and with the State governments for State banks to determine when such point is reached, and the penalty for laxity in enforcing this measure should consist in making the examining authority, whether the State or Federal government, liable for loss to depositors in a bank that has not been closed or whose assets have not been replenished through stockholder assessments before its assets have fallen below the minimum required margin of safety.

REASONS

We consider this method of safeguarding depositors' interests better, in the long run, than a direct guaranty of deposits, which might tend to lessen responsibility and place a premium on careless banking and bank supervision.

GOLD CLEARANCE STANDARD

We recommend bringing about a great world-wide economy in the use of gold by reserving the use of gold to banks for clearing the daily credit balances between the banks themselves, and by using for currency only negotiable bank notes, similar in function to negotiate bank checks. These bank notes could be cleared daily in the same manner as checks on banks, and their value in terms of gold would be maintained by the simple fact that the daily clearing balances would have to be settled in gold, both as between banks and between nations. This, in essence, is the well-tested Scotch system of bank notes and bank clearances, and to a certain extent is the basis of the Canadian system.

PURPOSES

Some standard of measuring value for a medium of exchange is imperative. Gold, we believe, as a commodity, best serves this purpose. But endless confusion and human misery has resulted from confusing the use of gold as a standard of measure with the use of gold as a popular circu-

lating medium. In the United States, certainly, bank deposits, transferable by checks, serve as the chief medium of exchange, with currency supplementing checks for small transactions and in cases where a transferable instrument is required.

ADVANTAGES

The removal of gold coin as a general circulating medium and its restriction to use as a clearance medium would reduce the occasional hysterical premium on gold itself which has often been the cause of falling prices of all other goods measured in gold. The gold clearing system would combine the advantages of a uniform standard of measure without the penalties attendant on the fiction of gold redemption for the general public.

CONCLUSION

It will be obvious that no one of these recommendations stands alone. By organizing industry with full regard to eliminating unfair competitive practices and the reign of limitless free competition of the *laissez faire* system, and planning for stabilization of employment, unjust accumulations of wealth will be avoided and purchasing power be more evenly distributed. By substituting equity financing for the present dual financing by equities and long-term debtor obligations, many of the abuses of speculative activity will be reduced, especially if this is done within the frame-work of an organized industry. The adoption of the gold-clearance basis should in time tend to reduce the violence of movements in the price level and that again should lead to a reduction in public speculative activity. On the other hand, with greater stability in financing, with greater stability in the banking structure, in currency issue, and in the price level maintained, the acute problems of proper distribution of earnings can work themselves out with far less friction than under the present conditions of violent industrial cycles and violent price changes.

The program offered by your committee presents, we believe, an interrelated structure whose ultimate basis is the application of ethical standards and whose sincere purpose is the achievement of greater stability and economic security for millions of human beings.

The Grail Movement

E. BOLAND

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THE World is full of Youth Movements today. They spring up in ever increasing numbers, some non-confessional like the Boy Scouts, some purely Catholic like the Jocistes in Belgium and the Neudeutschland in Germany, some political like the Italian Balilla, others frankly anti-Christian like the Comsomol, the Communist League of Youth. They all have one characteristic in common, a remarkable enthusiasm. They are not blocks of apathetic young people whom their elders are trying to galvanize into activity: they are keen, alert, interested propagandists with a conscious mission. The Holy Father, surveying his world-flock, testifies to this activity in its midst and reveals its cause.

It is, indeed, a powerful inspiration of the Holy Spirit which is now passing over all the earth, drawing especially the souls of the young to the highest Christian ideals, raising them above human respect, rendering them ready for every sacrifice, even the most heroic. (*Caritate Christi.*)

Among these recent Catholic movements there must now be counted one which, in its few years of existence, has already achieved a great success: I refer to "The Grail." Its 15,000 members, its twenty-five Grail-houses, have made it already a force in Holland, its country of origin. It is well established in Berlin where it has three houses and some thousands of members; it has begun its missionary activities by settlements in the Dutch East Indies, and quite recently it has opened two houses in London. It is Catholic through and through, and its object is to win the world for Christ, by enlisting the younger members of the "devoted female sex" in the Apostolate. Here, certainly, is a program for enthusiasts; a program whose very vastness might prove its undoing were not the energy of its members skilfully directed into safe and fruitful channels and youthful inexperience guided past yawning pitfalls. This work is under-

taken by the "Ladies of the Grail," known in Holland as "the Women of Nazareth."

They are members of a Religious Congregation, founded originally in Holland, near the Hague, in 1921 by the Rev. J. van Ginneken, S.J., with the approval of the Bishop of Haarlem. Like the White Cross of Germany, the Medical Missionary Society of America and the Company of St. Paul in Italy, the Congregation is the outcome of a new development in religious life in the Church. Many women, alive to the spiritual needs and the particular dangers of our own day have longed to lead dedicated lives, like Our Lord's original entourage, and while mixing with the world, to form part of a religious organization from which to draw their inspiration, their rule of life and specific guidance in the service of God. Wonderful has been the provision made in the Church to meet these aspirations. Father Martindale, writing in *The Month* (August, 1932), shows how these desires, which seem to have been long latent everywhere, are now springing into flower under the blessing of authority and the stimulus of modern conditions. There are today new tasks and new sorts of work to be done and they demand new methods. The Church has always encouraged a wide interpretation of religious life, fitting it to the needs of the time. She encourages alike the Marys and the Marthas. She has blessed not only the great old Religious Orders whose subjects lead a life of contemplation and praise, shut off from the world behind a double grille, but also the newer Congregations whose members lead an active life in the world the better to work in it for God, who, indeed, "fulfils Himself in many ways."

That is not to say that the path of the pioneer has always been easy. When St. Francis de Sales founded the Order of the Visitation with the express purpose of visiting the poor in their own homes, good people were so scandalized and raised so great a storm of protest, that he was obliged to withdraw his nuns from their work of mercy to the safe shelter of enclosed life, and it was left to St. Vincent de Paul to establish the Sisters of Charity "whose cloister is the street."

This new Congregation, the Women of Nazareth, had aimed, in the first instance, at the conversion to the Faith of non-Catholic girls and women, and were doing much good

work in that way by means of retreat-houses and other social enterprises. But in 1929 their diocesan decreed that what was even more needed was the conversion of Catholics—to the full realization of the vast implications of their Faith, and particularly of the *duty* of being, according to their talents, Apostles. And so, in March of that year, the Grail, as we know it, was born, in obedience and sacrifice, into what has proved its providential vocation.

These Ladies of the Grail mix still more freely in the world than do the Sisters of Charity and the nursing Orders, and though, whilst at home in their Mother House, they wear a religious habit, they dress according to the fashion of the day when they are at work in the world. The fact that they look like the people around them is clearly a considerable advantage in their work: it is indeed a necessity. In this matter, too, they do but follow others. Time and again the foundresses of Religious Orders have chosen the simple dress of the period for their daughters in the hope of being inconspicuous. Thus the members of a Congregation founded in the middle of the last century, dressed like widow ladies of their time, in order that they might the more easily work among the non-religious poor, but changing fashions have defeated them and turned their simple secular dress into a recognizable religious habit. And long before them the Venerable Mary Ward, a Yorkshire woman (1585-1645), founded a Congregation for the education of girls, which was originally meant to pursue its work without the safeguards (which are also impediments!), of enclosure and the religious habit. She, it is true, suffered the fate of the far-sighted pioneer and her Congregation, after affording the material of endless discussion amongst canonists, was suppressed in its original form during her own lifetime. But, though later on it was revived in substance, and flourishes as the "Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary" today, certain aspects of her bold conception have had to wait for their realization till our own time. In this sense the Grail and similar bodies are in the line of an old tradition.

The religious training of members of the Congregation, the nucleus of the whole Movement, follows the usual course. In a two-and-a-half year novitiate spent at the Mother House the novice is prepared for the special life

that lies before her. The rule stresses self-abnegation and obedience. It is clear that, in proportion to the lack of the usual outside helps to perfection given by community life and observance, religious garb and some measure at least of enclosure, the inner development of character must be doubly thorough and sound. As the aspirant is later to be given considerable liberty and will be called on frequently to rely on her own judgment and take decisive action, she has above all to acquire supernatural prudence. She has to learn to use her liberty with self-control, to check the power of initiative given her by the strictest submission to discipline, and to be unstintedly generous of herself.

Once she has passed her novitiate the member of the Congregation is sent out to her Apostolate of Grail work, but throughout her life she remains in close contact with the Mother House. For one complete day in every month, again for one month in every year, and for one year in every six, she returns there to renew her fervor. Thus it is clear that the Grail spirit is by no means an easy compromise between the world and the cloister, in which the religious chooses the pleasantest side of each life and combines them in a comfortable existence. She has "to use the world yet with restraint." It is a serious vocation, entailing a high ideal of service and selflessness, as well as special personal qualifications in which ability to lead and readiness to obey are present in equal proportion.

The work of the Congregation, to which this sifting and training and testing are the prelude, lies, as has been said, chiefly among girls and young women of all classes from after school age onwards. Its aim is to maintain and foster and develop the religious training already received and to turn good Catholics into veritable apostles. Thus is illustrated the fact that the pursuit of moral perfection is not the concern only of those who are technically "religious," for these children take no vows, yet the "first and greatest" commandment applies to them as does the exhortation to be perfect "like their Heavenly Father." Simple membership of the Grail in no way presumes future membership of the Congregation, any more than a childhood passed in a convent school is expected to result in a religious vocation. On the contrary, marriage is looked on as the natural vocation of most of the members and considerable attention is paid

to fitting them to be the mothers of the future. The greatest respect for the Sacrament of Matrimony is instilled into them and the highest ideals of married life are set before them. But in and through the Grail-centers members are always kept in close touch with religious who are thus enabled—and this is the chief distinction of the Movement—to influence them directly during the whole period of adolescence; whereas normally those who train children in convent schools, however admirably, are compelled, like the poor hen that fosters ducklings, to see their charges swim away from them on the waters of life at the most critical time of their development. And never in the history of the world has that first independent voyage been more fraught with peril. Educators of girls everywhere have to face the same problem. Everywhere,—to put the matter in its most favorable light—good schools and good Catholic homes are turning out girls in thousands who, as they approach maturity, are plunged at once from a warm atmosphere of quiet piety into the temptations of a new world whose aims and ideals are, most of them, in direct opposition to all they have been taught to hold sacred. Bewildered by the contrast, and intoxicated with their new liberty, often intensified by a sudden increase of money to spend, they are apt either to lose their heads completely or to succumb within a year or so to the low ideals of the world.

A steadying influence is needed, an attraction which will hold the girl during those formative years and permit her character to set in a Catholic mould. This influence, this attraction, this character-building, it is the high function of the Ladies of the Grail to supply, and the following is the method they follow. In whatever center they are invited or permitted to settle, they establish one or more Grail-houses, each of which is staffed by two or three Ladies of the Congregation who are in continual residence, working in close cooperation with the Parish Priest, or priests; for one Grail-house usually serves three or four parishes. These centers provide for the girl-members all the amenities of a club, with sports, evening classes and recreational and cultural facilities. The girls come in their leisure hours and find there occupation, companionship and interest. The atmosphere is strongly Catholic and there is, in each center, a chapel where normally the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. When

groups are thus associated the work of individual development is begun, for the Movement, though controlled from above, has to be built up by the members themselves. They are taught not to rest content with being merely educated and entertained in the Grail-centers, but, as soon as possible after joining, to learn to spread the Movement. To each, on entering, a special task in the Grail and in the *milieu* in which she lives is given, according to her capacity. Here the possibilities are endless, from the distribution of the Grail paper or the organizing of the sports, to providing the music for the plays or studying the Youth Movements of other countries. Every activity of the kind is not only helpful in itself, but is valuable, because we are all prone to take a special interest in a thing which we ourselves are creating. Moreover, independence and a capacity to stand alone being the qualities most admired today, girls readily respond to an appeal for initiative on their part, rather than dumb acquiescence in a cut-and-dried program imposed upon them. So they themselves think out schemes for spreading the Grail and the value of their cooperation is shown by the growth of the enrolled members in little more than four years to the remarkable total of 15,000, a number daily increasing. Such a result could never have been achieved by the unaided zeal of the hundred Ladies of the Grail who, at present, compose the Congregation.

The corporate sense is fostered in members in many ways but in none more surely than by the Grail plays. These remarkable productions have achieved such renown that the Movement is sometimes credited with making the organizing of such demonstrations its chief object. In reality, they occupy only a small part of the life of the Movement, yet such is the impression created by these spectacles that it would be impossible to write about the Grail without mentioning them.

This development of the dramatic instinct, and the unique form which the Grail has given it, originated in a continuous search for plays for the girls to act; for in Holland, as in most countries today, there is a strong love of the theater. Shakespeare was acted, and the plays of Ghèon and a number of Catholic stage productions, but they did not fit the need. Their casts were too small compared with the membership, and looking on is no part of

the Grail tradition! Then an experiment was tried with the morality play of "Everyman," each part being entrusted to ten actors—and the solution was at hand. Now, by means of plays written by themselves, the Ladies of the Grail stage whole sagas of Catholic doctrine, plays in which there is no heroine, no star. Instead, mass moves against mass in a vast stadium, while chorus-speaking carries the words of the play to an audience of between thirty and forty thousand people. In the recent pageant of the life of St. Lydwina the number of performers was limited by the size of the stadium of Schiedam to seven thousand. The technical details of the production were beyond all praise, as was the art which founded so inspiring a play on the life of a saint, the child of humble people, who was crippled at the age of fifteen and thereafter spent in bed the remaining thirty-five years of life which remained to her. To say that in this play the doctrines of the Communion of Saints and of the happiness of suffering were brought home with extraordinary power will give some idea of the teaching value of this new method which the Grail has evolved for the service of God.

The modern love of dancing too has been turned to account, but the Grail, discovering that secular music has, by its intricate and involved movements, divorced itself from the true dance, has learned to translate into rhythmic movement the great plain-song canticles of the Church. The beauty of the Sanctus so expressed is an inspiration.¹ It is this progressive modernity of the Grail that is attracting to it many girls of the educated classes. They find there the opportunity of developing their talents along Catholic lines, yet in harmony with what is good in the spirit of the age, and step by step with their increase of secular knowledge. They are naturally a great power in the Movement, and there is one Grail-house in Holland whose membership consists entirely of University graduates. Some of these help with the literary and artistic side of the work; others devote themselves to the study of social questions particularly as they affect women, but whole fields lie waiting for development. The possibilities of the Cinema, that colossal influence both for good and for evil, are being studied, and much, it is felt, can be done to rescue sport for women from

¹See "The Grail" (C. T. S.: 2d.), by Lady Cecil Kerr, pp. 26-27.

those un-Catholic developments which have appeared in Italy and in the Balkans.

Certainly, originality of outlook is not frowned on in the Movement; this attitude and the fact that the Grail includes girls of every class has the great advantage of preventing anything like a dead level of mediocrity. One of the dangers that may befall a mass movement is that its members may be so organized and disciplined that they become mere pieces of mechanism subordinated to the good of the whole machine. But the Grail is a mass movement of individuals, each with her own life to be lived for God according to her particular vocation. The great care given in helping girls to choose their secular career is in keeping with this spirit and a Grail-house has been set apart for the purpose, where they may go for advice and testing. The strong insistence of character-training in the Grail-centers also prevents uniformity: the ideal of individual development is in fact set forth very happily in the decoration of one of the Grail chapels. Round the walls a dozen different flowers are represented, each growing as God made it, different from its neighbor in color, in height, in shape, in habit: yet all beautiful. So, says the Grail, God has created souls, each with its own special purpose in His scheme. The Grail prayer enforces this teaching: "Lord let me grow into that for which Thou has destined me."

Within the Grail, moreover, there are degrees of membership, each determined by the measure in which individuals have developed its spirit and each distinguished by the colors of its official dress. There are ceremonies of initiation, and members pass from one degree to another at the discretion of their own "Chief Leaders," and in certain cases, according to the votes of their companions. Active membership ceases normally at marriage, though an enthusiastic Grail girl will not lose her sympathy with the work even then. The happy, spring-like spirit of the Movement is aptly indicated by its fondness for bright colors in dress and decoration. . . .

Such then in merest outline is a sketch of this most hopeful and inspiring Movement, drawn from its actual work in its parent country, Holland. It is well worth the close study of all zealous Catholics, not because of any novelty of aim, for that is shared by all associations of Catholics trying to

fulfil their duty of developing the Faith in themselves and spreading it in their surroundings, but because of its determined effort to demonstrate the essential joy of Christianity and to "baptize" all human activities by associating them with the direct worship of God. And as regards its specific work of helping the young womanhood of the Church to be "whole-time" Catholics, recognizing the necessary place of prayer, sacrifice and service in the Catholic equipment, that has, as we have implied, its assurance of permanence and increase by its intimate association with a Religious Congregation, securing both unity and continuity.

God has manifestly blessed the Movement in Holland. Is there, it may be asked, any need for it, or any likelihood of its success, in this country? For the Grail only goes where, with episcopal approbation, it can supply a need: it is far from wishing to supplant other similar work. For instance, for that reason it has not sought to enter Belgium, where the admirable and widespread "Jociste" Movement would make it superfluous. Well, as for our need, we have, as the last issue of *The Month* made lamentably plain, always with us a terrible Leakage problem, affecting not only the poor, oppressed by hard industrial conditions, but also the educated and well-to-do, infected by the prevailing worldliness. Into a world, not only indifferent to religion, but with many of its youth definitely working for its overthrow,² our Catholic girlhood now has to step. By some means or other—and the Church supplies many—their religious education in its fullest sense must be continued after they leave the shelter of school if they are to ward off successfully the open and subtle attacks on their faith and morality which they are sure to encounter, and carry, as they ought, the war into the enemies' country. It would seem that no body, which aims so effectively as the Grail does to accomplish this double object, can in our circumstances today be thought superfluous. There are, of course, many sodalities ready to receive them, and there are societies which offer them opportunities of doing some particular Catholic work. To the steady practical girl with a

²Atheistic Communism, as Father Watt told the Conference of Religious Teaching Orders at Carshalton on June 10th, has a club of 400 members amongst the undergraduates at Oxford, and every University in the country has similar "cells," for Communism offers a cause and a program to youth deprived of real religion.

definite religious outlook, such associations will at once appeal. Within them she can develop her Catholic life to the full. But not every girl, just "emancipated," will maintain her former devotional practices or take up work of a particular kind, and the trouble is that it is just this liberty-loving, life-enjoying, type of girl, with no liking for routine and rule, who is in the greatest danger of drifting from the Church into purely secular associations alien to the Catholic spirit, unless she is anchored early. The Grail with its strongly developed social side attracts such girls. They like its joyous atmosphere, its bright uniforms, its very unconventionality. And, once they have joined, the Movement will have failed lamentably if they do not absorb fairly soon its spirit of happy service, and realize that God does indeed love the cheerful giver.

And, on the other hand, the intelligent girl, alertly Catholic, whose eyes are opened to the real romance of the struggle against "the spirits of wickedness in high places" which work through the secular atheistic movement of our time, finds here work after her own heart. To her there is a fascination in countermining the enemy and using his own weapons to defeat himself, in forming pro-God cells in shops and offices and universities. Life is full of adventure in a pro-God Movement with members as keenly pro-God as its opponents are anti-God. The plan of campaign is laid before the members. They are shown that the strongest form of defence is attack and they are urged to be "bold, dangerous, and infectious Catholics," inoculating those round them with the love of God, as deliberately as the Bolsheviks try to infect, with hatred of Him, those within their reach.

The Cardinal Archbishop, always keen to utilize every influence for good, has approved the Grail in his diocese. Already London girls are joining the Grail. Leaders are being trained in the Head House at 58 Sloane Street, and a Grail House for members has been opened in the north of the city. But it is too early yet to say exactly on what lines the Movement will develop in England. With its immense powers of adaptability, it will, doubtless, evolve a specially British type of Grail girl who, whatever differences she may outwardly display, will be at one with her sisters everywhere in whole-hearted and joyous work for the greatest of all causes, the winning of the world for Christ.

AN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY

SOME months ago an international Congress of Catholic Philosophy was held at Prague under the patronage of the Hierarchy and with the concurrence of the Government and of the University authorities. The Congress had been called by the Dominican Fathers of Olomouc, where Father Methodius Haban founded the first Slav review of Catholic Philosophy a few years ago. Leading theologians and laymen from various countries responded to the Czech Dominicans' invitation to make a positive demonstration of the actuality of the teaching of the Angelic Doctor. Some three hundred persons met on October 6th last in the great hall of Charles University—the oldest seat of learning in Central Europe—to listen to discourses and debates in Latin, French, German and Czech, all of which revealed the vitality of Catholic thought. To the uninitiated non-Catholic it has often seemed as though the abstruse study of Thomism could have no bearing on the practical problems and issues at stake before us today. Any such notions must have been dispelled even at the outset of the congress by the inaugural address of the Chairman, Dr. George Rueckel, a remarkably active and erudite layman, who outlined the purpose and scope of Catholic Philosophy. Father Haban, O.P., read a paper showing that the metaphysics of St. Thomas can be brought to the solution of all the problems of modern life. Professor Noel of Louvain discussed the realism of St. Thomas; and of intense interest was the paper read by Professor Matocha, of the Theological Faculty of Olomouc, who analyzed the negation of the ontological basis of personality as resultant in the materialism of Soviet Russia. Professor Jolivet, of Lyon University, compared the teachings of St. Thomas on intuition with those of Henri Bergson. The distinguished German Jesuit, Father Przywara of Munich University, dealt exhaustively with the modern standards of value as compared with the criteria of St. Thomas. The objectivity of human cognition was the theme of Father Boshkovitch, O.P., of Zagreb. Other papers showed that whilst St. Thomas had invented no system

he had correlated Aristotelian, patristic and mediæval philosophy and elaborated a structure which survived the centuries. His work remains immortal and paramount because it is the synthesis of classical European thought. Scientific achievement would hardly have reached its present high status had the Scholastics not trained the modern mind in the syllogistic process of reasoning which leads to abstract thought. By means of abstract thought matter had been reduced to scale, weight, number, and thus finally mastered.

For the non-Catholic *intelligentsia* which attended the Prague Congress, new vistas were certainly opened of the virility of Catholic Scholarship, and an approach to many problems and intricacies was shown which offers fresh hope and encouragement where counsels of despair have already been accepted by many.

The initiative of the Czech Dominican Fathers, which received Papal approval, has been so fruitful that already plans are being made for a second Congress of Catholic Philosophy to be held two years hence in Poland.—A. Christitch.